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JANUARY 1988

The public library as an open learning centre
HENDRIK VAN DER ZEE 1-15

Traditionally one of the basic functions of public libraries has been to facilitate learning. The question is how this function could be or ought to be interpreted. In this essay the concept of the open learning centre is used to probe the library's proper role in fostering the motivation for learning and in supporting learning efforts. The fruitfulness of the concept will be demonstrated and its implications explored.

Information in the construction industry: quantity surveyors and information technology
MICHAEL SHOOLBRED and PETER MILLER 16-35

Within the construction industry, quantity surveyors (QSs) hold a key place as information managers. The article reviews a research study of the QS's information use and the impact of IT. QSs tended to be concerned about the facilities available to them. The pressure of time and their experience were key factors in information use. They were frequently suspicious of IT systems and realistic about the problems, especially the financial cost and time pressures. The conclusions suggest that there is an important role for librarians in this industry to promote information services, whether in a manual or an IT-based format.

Is the librarian a distinct personality type?
DAVID P FISHER 36-47

A critical assessment is made of psychological investigations into the personality of the librarian conducted over the last 30 years. The influence of societal stereotypes upon psychological research is examined. Problematic methodologies and conflicting results preclude the emergence of any distinct personality profile common to librarians. The studies fail to demonstrate links between the individual and the organization. The efficacy of the whole psychological enterprise is brought into question.

Review articles

A new service for those who care
MARY J AUCKLAND 48-53

This review article notes research into the information-using habits of social scientists and the existence of some well-established bibliographic services as well as those more recently started. It then analyses a new published service—ASSIA—and its potential use.

Gender equality in librarianship
CHRISTINE TILLEY 54-9

Equal opportunities in librarianship? is reviewed in the context of similarities between the current status of women in librarianship in Britain and in Australia. It describes the strengths of Burrington's research, and how it has extended previous similar research, as well as suggesting further, future areas of relevant, related research.

Public library buildings
GODFREY THOMPSON 60-5

This review considers a recent publication and its predecessors.

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The state of retroconversion in the United Kingdom: a review
DEREK LAW 81-93

This paper was commissioned in March 1987 by the Centre for Catalogue Research (now Centre for Bibliographic Management) at the University of Bath, for presentation to the LIBER Working Group on Library Automation. It discusses the background to retroconversion, the advantages and disadvantages of the various methods of tackling the work, project costs and the problems to be faced. There is a discussion of future trends and desirable areas of research both nationally and internationally.

Management information in the British Library Humanities and Social Sciences division
ELIZABETH SPARROW 94-107

An effective library planning system should incorporate a set of clear objectives, a means of monitoring resources allocated to services and a system of measuring performance to assess how far the library is achieving its objectives. The British Library's prime objectives are given in its Strategic Plan, published in 1985. A detailed costing system provides information about resources allocated to services. Until recently, Humanities and Social Sciences had few corporate measures which could be used to assess how the division was performing. This article describes how performance indicators are being evolved and looks at some of the problems encountered.

Current awareness for local government
R J DUCKETT 108-127

Despite recent criticisms made of journal-based current awareness services, the continued growth of YADLOGIS (Yorkshire and District Local Government Indexing Service) testifies to the value of such services. YADLOGIS also provides a successful model for library cooperation, one which has flourished despite financial pressures and changes of membership. An outline of the system provided by the eleven cooperating libraries is given and comments are made on issues arising. These include the conflict between indexing for current

awareness and for information retrieval, the lack of commercially produced alternatives, and the problems of leadership in cooperative ventures.

Performance measurement: a historical perspective
DEBORAH L GOODALL 128-44

Performance measurement is a topic of current interest at both national and local level. This article is a selective historical review of performance measurement from the 1960s to the present day. Despite the plethora of literature on the topic there appears to be a notable lack of progress. Some of the major and most recent work is assessed and the fundamental difficulties in attempting to measure the performance of library services are noted. It is suggested that future work must concentrate on output measures which are both appropriate to the service being provided and easy to understand by all.

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British Library microform publications and their bibliographic control
JULIAN WARNER 159-80

British Library microform publications are omitted from the national bibliography and poorly controlled bibliographically. There are prospects for improvement in the control of microfilm reissues but not of British Library publications in computer output microform, typically major bibliographies and catalogues. Viewing these bibliographies and catalogues together suggests that there is no clear demarcation of the intended contribution of each work to bibliographic control. Neither is there evidence of overall regulation of British Library publishing activity. The concept of bibliographic control would also seem to have diminished in practice. Sources of information in an information-handling organization are not necessarily unified or coordinated.

Librarians in a police state: South African academic libraries and the problem of censorship
CHRISTOPHER MERRETT 181-93

Censorship is considered in the South African political context and the relevant statutes and regulations are described in terms of their impact on libraries. It is seen as extremely damaging to the academic process and a dilemma for the librarian. Two models derived from this situation portray the librarian as victim and as collaborator. They show that librarians have been unimaginative and have ignored international standards. Both universities and the profession have failed to take significant corporate action while censorship has tightened under successive states of emergency. For human rights librarians, it is concluded, the only effective way forward is a new professional body in the democratic tradition.

Technology and the British National Bibliographic Service
ANDY STEPHENS 194-204

The British National Bibliographic Service provided by the British Library is designed to support book selection and acquisition, information retrieval, cataloguing and other technical processes in libraries. Throughout the four decades of its development, new production technologies have done much to determine the elements of the service, which

currently include printed and microfiche bibliographies, and online and magnetic tape based machine-readable services. This article reviews, from a technical perspective, the evolution of the service, and surveys the present environment in which it supports the library functions that it is intended to serve.

The teenage library in Bradford: an evaluation of Xchange
JANET NICHOLSON and HELEN PAIN-LEWINS 205-17

A profile is presented of Bradford's Xchange library users, derived from an analysis of responses to interview questionnaires. Respondents were invited to give their opinions of the existing facilities and staff and to suggest improvements to the service. These are reported here, as are the results of further surveys which examined the dissemination of information about Xchange among Bradford teenagers, and library staff attitudes to the innovative teenage library. Overall, it was shown that Xchange has succeeded in attracting teenagers and serving their needs, with beneficial effects for both teenagers and other Central Library users. Recommendations are made for further development.

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Marketing a public sector business library:
developing a strategy
ALEC GALLIMORE 235-54

A model is described for the development of a marketing strategy in a public sector business library. A stage-by-stage analysis of the model is given, with reference to the strategy of Manchester Commercial Library, and with examples of how the strategy has been applied in practice. The model is proposed as a suitable basis for developing a marketing strategy for any library or information service.

The careers of MA graduates: training,
education and practice
BRENDAN LOUGHRIDGE and
JANE SUTTON 255-69

Graduates of MA Librarianship programmes at the University of Sheffield were asked about their first and current professional posts, the relevance and value of pre-library school work experience, the content of the MA course, job mobility and job satisfaction. Work experience was seen to have had considerable impact on selection of course options and on career expectations but not on subsequent career decisions. Three out of four graduates were satisfied with their present jobs. The number employed in academic libraries has declined, with a significant proportion of graduates moving into jobs outside traditional libraries. The most positive comments on course content and relevance were made by those with most experience in professional posts.

Development of user studies at Sheffield
University, 1963-88
N ROBERTS and T D WILSON 270-90

The development of user studies at the Department of Information Studies, Sheffield University, is described. The research work

of students and staff in this area is analysed. Generalizable findings are discussed and attention is drawn to methodological, application and educational implications.

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